

the right. More Christians are "weak and sickly" to-day from a lack of knowledge of God's Word than from any other cause.

Men and women read everything else before the Bible.

How, then, can the Old Book be made interesting, yes, even fascinating?

First, realize that a knowledge of God's Word in its entirety and in detail is necessary to a real Christian life. The Bible says that such is the case. Read Psalm 119 to learn the importance of Bible study. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way." All agreed so far, but why are they "undefiled?" Listen: "Who walk in the law of the Lord." How can a Christian walk in God's law unless he knows it?

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart." Why? "That I might not sin against thee." People can never hide in their hearts what they do not first hide in their heads. If you hide God's word in your heads, it will get into your heart.

"Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Open your Bibles, then pray God to open your eyes. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Is it not logical to infer that if we have not the word and do not know it, we are walking in darkness? Hear Paul to the Colossians. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Listen to Jesus' words: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." Jno. 5:39.

These words of Jesus show not only the necessity but the method also, *search*.

I have found two methods very good to interest and instruct myself, the latter of which I consider best, as it is most thorough, though slowest. The first is the study of subjects, e. g., Faith is the subject. With a concordance find everything in the Bible on faith. Look up all references. Study the verse in its connections. Notice the circumstances in which it was exercised, how it was rewarded, and the lesson to yourself. Learn by heart the most striking passages.

The second method is to study it by books. Take a book. Learn when it was written, where, by whom, under what circumstances and for what purpose. Read it again studying the men and women mentioned therein. Then read it again, studying the teachings of the book. In so doing select the central thought of the book. All these important things write down either in a note book or on the margin of your Bible. Never fear to mark your Bible. Underline any text

that seems especially striking in any way. Read the chapter carefully and note the central thought and key verse in each. This may seem tedious, but it will pay both in intellectual and in spiritual satisfaction to yourself. When you have done all this, you will know something about that book. Do not hurry. In this way it may take years to master the Bible, but hasty, unsystematic study of the Bible is always unsatisfactory and unprofitable, comparatively speaking. When you have done this you will be prepared to talk religion instead of nonsense to your neighbor and to live a more godly, Christ-like life.

Learn the texts selected by heart. Hide it in memory.

These are simply hints on the main precept, "Search."

J. L. GILLIN.

#### HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE.—NO. 5.

God has given us his blessed Word by which we can acquaint ourselves with God and divine things and learn the way to eternal life. He has told us to search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they that testify of me.

In order that this search or study may be profitable, one is in need of a library. But it is not essential that your library be large or expensive; yet it would be very advantageous and convenient. One can not study successfully without books. A small library well handled is better than a large one idly handled. It is like a pen-knife in skillful hands is better than a full tool chest in the hands of a bungler.

First. You must have a reference Bible, and that should be a good one. It is a matter of no little importance to have one Bible that is good enough to last a life time. We learn to know Scripture texts by their localities. Next to a reference Bible is a Bible text book and a concordance. The difference between the text book and the concordance is that the former gives you references to Scripture teaching according to subjects, while the latter gives classification of all Scripture texts according to words. For example, the word atonement is only found once in the Bible, hence only one verse is referred to; but if you look in your text book you will find many references, for the N. T. is full of the doctrine. Next you need a good standard Bible Dictionary. The object of this is to give a knowledge of biblical geography and antiquities.

Next you need a good commentary on the Bible. I know a great many persons have a contempt for commentaries, but in my estimation we can make them valuable helps in the study of the Bible.

I would conclude that time is as important as a library. To what I have already said on the subject, let me add a few practical rules for Bible study.

When we read, search, or study the Scriptures, let it be done,

1. With the deepest reverence as the Word of God.

2. With a devout mind, with heartfelt dependence on various influences of the Holy Spirit.

3. With reflection, as a creature endowed with intelligence and reason. Reading without reflection will communicate no solid knowledge; it can at the most only fill the mind with crude, superficial, partial, and unconnected notions.

4. With patience, not expecting to know in a day all that they reveal, or to be in a day all that they require.

5. With a direct reference to personal improvement.

6. With a proper recollection of what we read; as whether it be a doctrine, command, promise, warning, character, or event, etc.

7. With such freedom as to only be taught of God and to be cast into the pure mold of the Gospel of Christ.

8. With constant interrogation and self application; what do I know of this truth, feel of this principle or affection, enjoy of this promise, fear of this threat, and avoid of this evil.

9. With meek and fervent prayer to the Father of light, make what you read the ground-work of your supplications.

10. With a grateful heart always bless the Father for giving us the rich treasure of his Word.

11. With a just sense of responsibility God demands of us a due improvement of his gifts.

12. With constancy, not by fits and starts, not at wide intervals of time, but habitually, daily, through the whole life.

J. F. KOONTZ.

#### HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE.—NO. 6.

1. Divest the inner, intellectual and spiritual man of all prejudice, bigotry, preconceived opinions and sectarianism.

2. Do not think of denominationalism in the day and age in which you live, neither of the ties of kindred relationship.

3. Keep the heart open to the conviction of truth observing the following rules:

1. That every word has a *primary* and *obvious* meaning of its own and should not be departed from, unless so qualified as to necessitate a departure.

2. That a word applied to one thing can have but one meaning.

3. Never follow authors, commenta-